

through the newspaper despatches of which he complained. For the most part they were not ill-natured, nor was their comment on a confused and perplexing question, of undoubted public interest, unfair. I told him that the Government could not prevent the Canadian newspapers from writing news stories and publishing comments on this country's relations with France or about the present position of the French Legation. A large part of the hostile comment was really directed at the Government and at you. The Government and you would not use the Censorship to protect the Government from political criticism.

He showed me a draft press statement he had prepared for issue by the Legation regretting speculation and comment in the press on the position of the Legation and its officers, and explaining that they were "awaiting instructions, to which they would conform". I suggested that if he issued such a statement, the first question would be from whom were the "instructions" expected, which would at once reopen the questions he wished to close.

Mr. Ristelhueber was obviously hoping that a government would be set up in North Africa which he could regard as a direct successor of the Marshal's Government at Vichy, and which he could continue to represent in Canada. We had at this time neither of us received word of the organization which was being established under Admiral Darlan at Algiers, and I told him I could see no grounds for believing in the resurrection of a national government at Vichy which could be recognized by the Government of Canada. We had deferred for four days presenting him with the note which you had communicated to him in draft form on Monday, November 9th. In the circumstances, I felt I had to hand it to him. He was reluctant to take it, but he finally accepted it, murmuring something about the "die being cast".

Within an hour news of Admiral Darlan's proclamation¹² at Algiers was in the evening newspapers and Mr. Ristelhueber came back with the note I had given him. He saw in Darlan an acceptable successor to Marshal Pétain, whom his conscience would permit him to follow. From Darlan he felt he and his Legation could receive instructions which they could obey.

I agreed that Darlan's proclamation, issued under American auspices with the support of General Nogues and of the Governor General of Algeria, had injected a new and important element into the situation which we would have to take into account. In the circumstances, I was willing to take back our note until I had had an opportunity of consulting you. I told Mr. Ristelhueber that we were very glad to see the elements of a French opposition coalescing in North Africa, though I personally did not share his enthusiasm for Admiral Darlan. However, in a time of crisis like this it was important for all elements of French resistance to cooperate, regardless of their past political differences, and I assumed that the group organized under Darlan in Algeria would work together with the other Fighting French forces which had been fighting for France and against the Nazis since the armistice. He rather flared up at this suggestion, and repudiated the idea that Darlan should be associated with General de Gaulle and the French National Committee.

I think Ristelhueber sees himself as the representative of a Vichy Government transplanted to North Africa and in direct apostolic succession to the

¹²Voir chapitre 8, partie 2.

¹²See chapter 8, Part 2.